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In the afternoon I nearly lost my way among the trails leading to the village. The blind Indians who accompanied me, as well as the guide and the interpreter, had strayed ahead, leaving me behind with two companions, and had already reached the maloca while I still attempted with difficulty to find my way, guided only by the sound of a horn which I could hear somewhere ahead of me.

It was a Mundurucu Indian from Necedemen, who had graciously come to meet me, and who blew on his instrument to guide me.

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My satisfaction was great when at nightfall I came upon this savage, who was about thirty-five or forty, and who was short, fat, dark and ugly, but so happy and cheerful that he seemed like a child. [81]

I arrived in Necedemen at seven o'clock in the evening.

I was finally realizing one of my fondest wishes, namely, to see a savage tribe in its primitive state, exactly as it must have been before the discovery of Brazil, living according to the laws of nature and lacking all contact with the ideas of other peoples that might serve to alter its beliefs and traditions.

There are thinkers who do not acknowledge biblical tradition and who hold that mankind began its earthly journey in darkness, in the state of judity and savagery I saw before me, and guided by the light of reason and by Providence climbed to the present state of civilization. This doctrine is more comforting than the one which represents man as fallen from a paradise of light and bliss, fallen, for minor sins that were not his own, into the extreme misery of these unhappy savages.

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When I arrived, some eighty stout Mundurucu awaited me on the village grounds and received me with a display of open curiosity.

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To me, the appearance of these men was no less curious, painted as they were with such identical designs that they looked like uniformed soldiers. Dozens of fires which burned on the square lent this picture a sinister quality, casting reflections on the broad, naked, bronze-colored chests.

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I greeted them, bidding them good evening with one of the few words in their language I had memorized for such purposes: "Chipate." They all answered: "Chipate." One of them addressed

MUNDURUCU MOIETIES

11

It may be remarked incidentally that the Mundurucu children have the Mongolian spot, as have also the Apitá children.

MOIETIES AND SIBS

The Tapajó Mundurucu—and probably also the Madiere and Xugu Mundurucu—have a well-developed moiety and sib system. The members of the individual sibs, with few exceptions seemingly, consider themselves related to the eponymous animals and plants. In the lists which we give below the plant sibs are marked with an "(m)". Several of the sibs have plural or multiple totems.

The ancestors of the sibs are called *tobé* or *tobé* and are embodied (as *verwandi*) in the large *ladole* wind-instruments which are looked upon as having life. The *ladole* are blown at the men's festival (Mammurion). At the end of the festival or rite, *malvi*, a drink prepared for the festival out of masticata is poured into the *ladole* from above, is caught in a *cila* (native cup), and is drunk. The meaning of the ceremony is this: The ancestor of the sib is not to get angry; he is always to remain benignant toward his children.

A member of the Red Arara sib is in no sense prohibited to shoot and to eat an arara. The same holds for the members of other sibs toward their respective eponymous animals and plants.

The sibs are arranged in two moieties or marriage groups, the "Whites" and the "Reds". This arrangement was ordained by Karusakabé, himself a "Red", since he belonged to the Karu-mout, the Red Arara sib. The moieties are strictly exogamous. The members of each moiety are under obligation to marry, not within their own moiety, but into the other moiety. Disobedience to this precept of the culture-bringing god, Karusakabé is considered as an unheard-of thing.

The sibs are rigidly patrilineal, that is, the children become members of their father's sib. Only where sibs are *i herip*, "related" (*verwandt*), may a child become a member of one of these related sibs. The Macaco prego sib and the Spider sib are, for example, "related".

It has previously been mentioned that the Mundurucu formerly had thatched huts with conical roofs. These huts are the dwelling places of totemistically organized tribes (Stämme). The last [See errata sheet, category 116, p. 57-A. - Analyst]

of a different origin. Since I have already given the essential material¹⁷⁹ about the Apiacas it might, however, be appropriate to repeat here what I reported about the Mundurucú (Reise in Brasilien III, 1308 et. seq., 1327.) for no other traveller has actually observed these remarkable Indians in their native habitat.

The Mundurucú, Mirindurucú, Mundurucú, Maturicú
(called by the Apiacas Parí)

[13] The Mundurucú are, together with the Apiacas, the ruling tribe^{*} in the northern basin of the Tapajós. Their largest aldeia de S. Manoel, which has trade connections with the Brazilians, lies about a day's journey below the junction of the Rio Arinos with the Juruena at the Rio Negro (vermelho).

- [52] [1817] When I met the first Mundurucú in the Missão Novo Monte Carmel de Canama I had to admit that I had never before seen Indians like these. Without exception they were athletically built, broad-chested and four-square, plump and well nourished in limbs and torso, and the hard muscles so evenly covered as though these people had never interrupted a life of comfortable relaxation with the hardships [516] of war and the hunt. Their posture and their walk was that of conscious strength. What struck me the most, along with the general physical excellence of every member of the tribe, was the light skin color. 304 They were not so deep a copper red as many other Indians, in particular those living on plains or on large rivers, and this paler color was considerably accented by the tattooing (it was not just painting) which covered almost the whole of the body. * Either the whole face was

^{*}See the illustration in Spix and Martius Reiseatlas. For this painful operation they use a comb made from the thorns of several varieties of palm trees. In all probability there is no other tribe in South America which practices tattooing to the same extent. Rob. Dudley has drawn similar ones from Guyana.

304 tattooed or there was in the middle of the face a semielliptical, blue-black spot from which numerous, parallel lines extended over the chin and lower jaw down to the breast. From the middle of one shoulder to the other, two or three lines half an inch apart run across the broad chest. Under these there are vertically placed diamonds, some filled in, some left in outline to the end of the chest. The rest of the torso is adorned similarly though not so completely and the same lines are repeated on the extremities with or without the diamonds. Variations are introduced according to individual taste. Among women the whole face is rarely blackened, they have only a malha, a crescent shape, the pointed horns of which are turned upward. Their [388] ears are pierced, [30] not in the lobe, but at the top in the first fold and they wear cane pegs ●142 in the holes. The face of these people is wide, with a low forehead [302] shadowed by the hair which is cut straight across, the facial features marked, coarse and expressive of good nature. The eyes are always dark and not so slanted as the eyes of Indians of the more southerly tribes. The nose is large, often somewhat curved, not so short and blunt, with flaring nostrils, like those we have noticed among the Indians of eastern Brazil. Their heads are covered with thick, shining black hair which turns gray among the Mundurucus only late and then only in individual cases. I have never seen among them, any more than among any other Indians, an old man who was white-headed. In the 257 wilds they are unclothed except that the men wear a jock strap [Suspensorium] of cotton or a tacanhaoba. The women I saw were wholly naked, even in the mission, and to get an apron on them for 285 church was a matter of some difficulty. The Mundurucus and their neighbors, the Maues, with whom they are friendly, are, like the Apiacas, skilled in the art of spinning cotton thread and weaving hammocks which they hang outside their huts on hot nights. To catch fish [226] they usually poison the water in which the fish are found.* They make

*They do this in ponds or dammed up brooks by stirring the crushed twigs and leaves of the timbo (Paullinia pinnata) into the water until it turns dark and foams. The fish, and even crocodiles, come to the surface belly up, stupefied or dead and the fish are eaten. The water is extremely poisonous.

[17] formed a war-like tribe far in the south along with other fellow tribesman with whom they then grew at odds and fought their way toward the north over the boundaries of their earlier common territory. What strikes me here as particularly remarkable is the contrast between a bodily structure according to all reports remarkably uniform and a very mixed dialect. On the one hand their light skin and the colossally

- [18] powerful muscular build makes them appear, in contrast to the other Indians, like thoroughbreds among ponies and would indicate that they developed these striking bodily characteristics over a long period of time, unmixed and under consistent external conditions. On the other hand [19] words occur in their language which can be considered to be echoes from tribes living far to the south and the north. *

"The Mundurucu word for "bird" is nusisa and among the Guaycurus far to the south it is nioche. Several words belong to the Guch or Coco tribe: "heaven," capí Mundr., capu Tamanaco, apex Chiquito. "Tooth (my)": wol noi M., nuoi Moxo. "Body": oi tãpit M., pitpitê Tamanaco. "Sun": uĩschí M., veju Accawai, Tamanaco, saache Moxo. "River" is described by the Mundurucu better than in the lingua geral, (where the word is yguacu) by the word icuri, or yghouri, which is to say "fast water"; it is called by the Galibis in Cayenne eicourou (or epouliri), by the Chiquitos ogirus. Two color names; white and red in Mundurucu are yuristat and ipacpec, in Kechuan yurac and paco.

The principal elements of their dialect belong without any question to the Tupi and in particular to the speech as practiced in the north rather than to the Guaraní dialect, though to this latter it is more similar in hardness and unwieldiness than to the more fluid and vowel-richer sounds of the lingua geral. * In the table which follows [397]

*Some relevant examples: oca "house," Mundurucu: ocka, T. curud, "toad,"

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a. Young Mundurucu man. Note tattooed vertical lines on neck and continuing use of ear plugs and arm bands. The houses of Cabral are in the background.

[343]



b. Mundurucu women gathered in the communal shed in which *farinha* is made.

[end plate 2]

THE SETTING

174 try of the Tapajós River. To the north, the terrain is covered by dense rain forest, but south of the Mundurucú country are great stretches of savannah that continue into the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Their distinct preference for unforested village locales could only have been acquired in their present home or further south. The previously mentioned cultural characteristics suggest the latter, although I can at present offer no further corroboration of this possibility.

191 Although the Mundurucú regard their traditional homeland as the area of mixed gallery forest and savannah between the Cururú and Tropas rivers, only about 360 of the 1,250 surviving Indians live there. Another 700 live along the banks of the Cururú itself, and approximately 200 on the Tapajós River and tributary streams. The person in

177 search of the exotic would be sorely disappointed at his
[298] first contact with the Mundurucú. They dress in Western
[301] style garments, albeit ill-fitting and ragged, and they adorn themselves with glass beads, brilliantine, plastic combs, and religious medallions. The five-gallon gasoline can is

[415] a far more important artifact than the clay pot, and they cook in aluminum pans. Since the Indian strain is so strong in the genetic make-up of the north Brazilian, the Mundurucú do not stand out sharply from their neighbors in physical characteristics. This is especially true of the
• 142 younger Mundurucú who are no longer tattooed from
[304] head to foot as their parents were.

The way of life of the Mundurucú residents of the
171 Tapajós shore is especially close to that of their Brazilian neighbors. That the fundamental methods of farming and fishing are similar among both populations is not surprising, as north Brazilian subsistence techniques are largely Indian-derived. But beyond that, the Tapajós-River Mundurucú live in single-house isolation and not in villages
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